



[Temporary Food Establishments and Events](#)

Image



A temporary food license must be obtained prior to set up and serving, selling or providing food at an event.

- An **event registration** costs \$50 and enables a civic, business, educational, government, community, or veterans organization (and may include athletic contests), to host, sponsor, or coordinate one temporary event with more than 10 food vendors (except fairs, as defined in [Iowa Code Section 174.1](#), and [farmers markets](#)). An event does not include a single store's grand opening or sale (i.e., a single store cannot host an event).
- An event registration application should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the event.
- A **single-event temporary food establishment license** costs \$50 and includes food establishments operating for a period of 14 consecutive days or fewer at a fair, festival, craft show, vendor show, or other event.

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- An **annual temporary food establishment license** is good for one year and must be obtained for each county where a vendor will operate a temporary food establishment in conjunction with an event or multiple events.
 - Temporary food establishment license applications should be submitted at least 30 days prior to the event.
 - Persons who operate simultaneously at more than one event within a county are required to have a separate license for each food stand.
 - Food vendors that are operating without proper licensure will be required to stop serving food while a temporary food license application is completed and an inspection is conducted at the food stand.
 - A double license fee will be collected for each food stand operating without an appropriate license.
 - Mobile food units operating outside the scope and requirements of their license at an event will be required to cease operating. They will have the option to fill out a temporary food license application and pay a double fee for operating without an appropriate license.

How to apply for a temporary food establishment license

[Apply or renew online](#)

Basic requirements for temporary food establishments

What food can be served in a licensed temporary food establishment?

- Menu items that are listed on the temporary food establishment license application and approved prior to the event may be served in a temporary food establishment.
- All food must come from a licensed and approved source [[Food Code 3-201.11](#)].
 - A nonprofit organization's premise is not considered an approved source unless it is licensed as a food establishment or a food processing plant. If the organization does not have a licensed food establishment, food processing plant, or mobile food unit, all preparation **must be done** the day of the event within the licensed temporary food

stand. Menus must be adjusted to accommodate production needs.

- Ingredients for menu items must be obtained from a licensed and approved source such as a grocery store, a federal or state inspected meat locker, or the food stand owner's licensed food establishment or mobile food unit, or a food processing plant.
- Menu items may be prepared in the food stand owner's licensed restaurant, food processing plant, or mobile food unit and appropriately transported to the food stand for service.
- Menu items may be prepared within the licensed temporary food stand the day of the event. No food may be prepared prior to the event unless it is done so in the food stand owner's licensed food establishment, food processing plant, or mobile food unit and noted on the license application.
- Nonprofit organizations **may** serve packaged or unpackaged foods that do not require temperature control from any source. (**Examples:** Baked goods and fruit pies made by organization members.)
- For nonprofits wishing to sell pies that require temperature control for safety, such as cream pies, custard pies, or meat pies - these items must be prepared in or purchased from a licensed and approved source (receipts must be provided). These types of pies may only be cut within the licensed temporary food stand or in a licensed facility.

**Note: Nonprofit organizations do not include municipalities or property of a municipality.*

When is a temporary food establishment license needed?

- When the temporary food stand is operating **off the premises** of a licensed food establishment (i.e., the physical facility, its contents, and the contiguous land or property under the control of the license holder) of your licensed food establishment (or for nonprofits*, off the premises of a facility regularly used by the nonprofit); or
- When a vendor serves, sells, or provides unpackaged food or beverages (including alcoholic beverages) to the public. (**Examples:** Tacos, burgers, lemonade, keg beer, mixed drinks, barbecue, pie by the slice, etc.); or
- When a vendor serves, sells, or provides commercially-prepared prepackaged food or beverages that require temperature control for safety. (**Examples:** Ice cream bars, bottles/cartons of milk, yogurt containers, etc.); or
- When a vendor serves, sells, or provides cut fruits that require temperature control for safety. (**Examples:** Cut watermelon, cantaloupe, and honeydew melons.)

When is a temporary food establishment license NOT needed?

For for-profit organizations:

- When a vendor is operating on the premises (i.e., the physical facility, its contents, and the contiguous land or property under the control of the license holder) of a licensed food establishment and is serving food or beverages from the establishment that are within the scope of the business (i.e., the regular menu or a menu preapproved by the regulatory authority); or
- When a vendor sells or provides commercially-prepared prepackaged food or beverages that do not require temperature control for safety. (**Examples:** Bottled sodas, packaged candy, packaged chips, packaged granola bars, etc., that are purchased from a store or food purveyor or prepared, packaged, and labeled for retail sale in your licensed food establishment or food processing plant); or
- When a vendor serves, sells, or provides whole, uncut fruits and vegetables; or
- When a vendor is operating within, and meeting all requirements of a licensed mobile food unit; or
- If a food stand is operated by a minor (i.e., a stand or other facility operated by a person or persons under the age of 18 at which food is sold directly to consumers that is not time/temperature control for safety, or an alcoholic beverage, and that operates on a temporary and occasional basis on private property with the permission of the owner of the property. (Events typically are not set up on private property.)

For nonprofit organizations*:

- When the nonprofit vendor serves, sells, or provides food or beverages on the premises (i.e., the physical facility, its contents, and the contiguous land or property under the control of the organization) regularly used by the nonprofit organization for one day per calendar week**; or
- Twice per calendar year a nonprofit organization may serve food to the public up to three consecutive days from their regularly-used premises**; or
- Twice per calendar year a nonprofit organization may serve food to the public from the premises of another nonprofit organization for one day (each time) to serve food**; or
- When operating off the premises regularly used by the nonprofit organization serving, selling, or providing only prepackaged food or beverages that do not require temperature control for safety. (**Examples:** Bottled sodas, packaged candy, packaged chips, packaged granola bars, etc. that are purchased from a store or food purveyor; or
- When operating off the premises regularly used by the nonprofit organization serving, selling, or providing prepackaged food that does not require temperature control for safety, and that is prepared and packaged by nonprofit organization members or family members. (**Examples:** Brownies, cookies, fruit pie, etc. These foods may be prepared in any clean, sanitary location and must be served in labeled packages containing the name and address of the person making the food and the common name of the food.)
- When a vendor serves, sells, or provides whole, uncut fruits and vegetables.

**Note: Nonprofit organizations do not include municipalities or property of a municipality.*

***Any food or beverage that is prepared and served safely may be provided by a nonprofit*

organization that meets these licensing exemptions above.

Guidelines for food stands operated by a minor

Effective in 2021, [Iowa Administrative Code 481 Chapter 30.2](#) was updated to add the following definition:

Stand operated by a minor means a stand or other facility operated by a person or persons under the age of 18 at which food is sold directly to consumers that is not time/temperature-controlled for safety, or an alcoholic beverage, and that operates on a temporary or occasional basis on private property with the permission of the owner of the property.

The definition of a food establishment does not include a stand operated by a minor.

A food operation that meets the definition of a stand operated by a minor does not require a license from the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals or any local contracted health department, nor is it subject to Iowa food safety regulations.

The legislation also prohibits any other municipality or regulatory authority in Iowa from requiring a license, permit, or fee for a food stand operated by a minor as long as it meets the definition.

A food stand meets the definition of a **stand operated by a minor** if:

- The stand is **fully** operated by a person or persons under the age of 18;
- The stand is operating on **private** property, with permission from the owner of the property;
- The stand is operating on a **temporary** basis;
- The stand is **not** selling food that requires time/temperature-control for safe consumption;
- The stand is **not** selling alcoholic beverages.

Technical requirements for temporary food establishments and events

Services

It is the food stand operator's responsibility to ensure that the following services are provided to them. If the town or event does not offer the services required, the responsibility lies with the food stand operator.

Electricity

- Ensure each stand has enough electricity to safely operate (lighting, mechanical refrigeration and hot holding)

Ice

- Ice shall be obtained from an approved source.
- Food that is not sealed in packaging shall not be stored in contact with water or ice.
- Packaged food or canned and bottled beverages may be stored in ice bins that are continuously drained.
- Ice that has been used for cooling or keeping food or beverage containers cold may not be reused in beverages provided to customers.
- Beverage ice shall be stored in the bag in which it is purchased or in clean, properly constructed ice storage units which are easily cleanable, and kept drained.
- Ice shall be dispensed with scoops, tongs, or other utensils with a handle, not with hands or drinkcups

Water supply, storage, and disposal

- Water shall be provided from an approved source- city, county, bottled, and wells that have a satisfactory water test within the last year. (Well tests should be submitted with the license application and available for review on site.)
- Waste water shall be disposed of in an approved waste water disposal system sized, constructed, maintained and operated according to law.
- Water storage units and hoses must be made from food grade material and used only for potable water.
- Water supply systems shall be protected against backflow or contamination.

Toilets and handwashing

- An adequate number of approved toilet and hand washing facilities shall be provided at each event

Personnel

Basic guidelines

- All employees, including volunteers, shall be under the direction of a designated person in charge at all times of operation.
- The person in charge shall ensure that all food handlers are following the temporary food stand requirements.
- Every employee and volunteer must sign a logbook with their name, address, telephone number, and the date and hours worked. This logbook must be maintained by the person in charge for 30 days.
- All food handlers shall be free of contagious or communicable diseases, sores, or infected wounds; must keep themselves and their clothing clean; and must keep their hair properly restrained.
- Tobacco use of any kind is not permitted inside the stand or while attending grills outside the stand.
- No eating or drinking is allowed in food preparation areas.
- Personal belongings shall be stored in a designated place adequately separated from food, food contact surfaces, and dishwashing areas.

Sick food handlers

- Cover lesions on the hands or wrist with an impermeable finger cot or stall and with a single-use glove.
- Exclude employees with a diagnosed foodborne illness (such as Norovirus, Salmonella, Shigella, E. coli 0157:H7 or Hepatitis A) or sudden onset of vomiting or diarrhea, from the establishment.
- Exclude or Restrict employees from working with exposed food or clean equipment, utensils, linen, and unwrapped single service and single-use articles when the following symptoms are present:
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Jaundice
 - Sore throat with fever
 - Open/draining lesions

Food prep and handling

Food preparation and handling

- Bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food is prohibited. Food handlers should limit direct hand contact with all foods as much as possible with the use of tongs, deli tissues, gloves, and other utensils.
- All food preparation and contact surfaces must be of a safe design with durable, smooth, and easily-cleanable surfaces.
- Food must be thawed, reheated, and cooled using procedures approved in the Food Code.

Food and condiment display

- Condiment stations must be located in an area where they may be constantly monitored.
- All foods on display shall be covered or individually packaged and meet appropriate temperature requirements.
- All food must be protected from customer handling, coughing or sneezing, and other contamination by wrapping, sneeze guards, or other effective means.
- The public is not allowed to serve itself from opened and uncovered containers of food.
- Sugar, ketchup, mustard and other condiments must be individually packaged or dispensed from closed squeeze, pour, or pump type dispensers.

Cooking and storage temperatures

All potentially-hazardous foods shall be refrigerated at 41°F or less or held at 135°F or higher. All cooling units must be equipped with an accurate, easily-visible thermometer. An accurate metal stem food thermometer must be provided to check storage and cooking temperatures. Cooking temperatures for meat products and reheating must be as follows:

- Poultry and ground poultry: 165°F
- All other ground meat: 155°F
- Pork or fish: 145°F
- Whole muscle beef: 145°F
- Reheated or microwaved items for hot holding: 165°F
- Properly-cooked foods hot holding: 135°F or above
- Cold holding: 41°F or below

*If raw or undercooked animal foods such as meat, eggs, or fish are served, a consumer advisory as required by the Food Code must be conspicuously posted or included in the menu.

Proper refrigerated storage

- Remember: The higher the cooking temperature of the food, the lower it should be stored on the shelves.

Thermometers

- Thin tip probe thermometers are required to monitor food cooking and holding temperatures.

Cooking, preparation, and service utensils

- All equipment and cooking utensils must be maintained in a sanitary manner.
- A three-compartment operation may be required for washing, rinsing and sanitizing. This requirement may be waived depending on the menu and the number of utensils being utilized by the operator.

Eating and drinking utensils

- Use disposable single-service plates, cups and utensils.
- If approved, reusable eating or drinking utensils (such as commemorative cups) must be washed, rinsed, sanitized and air dried using clean hot water and three basins large enough for immersion of the dishes prior to re-filling.

Food and food contact item storage

- All food supplies and food contact items shall be stored off the ground, and shall be properly covered to be protected from dust, rain or other contamination.
- Potentially-hazardous foods must meet temperature requirements as previously stated.
- Leftover cooked food must be discarded at the end of each day and cannot be reused.

Warewashing, handwashing, sanitizing, and waste disposal

Warewashing, sanitizers, and wiping cloths

- Chlorine bleach or another approved sanitizer shall be provided for warewashing and wiping cloths.
- Wiping cloths shall be provided for wiping counters, tables and other food contact surfaces. Cloths shall be rinsed frequently and stored in a clean sanitizer solution between uses.
- Sanitizing solutions shall be of an appropriate concentration. Chlorine sanitizer should be mixed to 50 ppm-100 ppm, quaternary ammonium sanitizers should be mixed to 200 ppm or as specified on manufacturer's instructions. All other sanitizers must be mixed to manufacturer's specifications.
- Test strips are required for checking sanitizer levels.
- Sanitizing solution shall be changed as needed to maintain the solution in a clean condition.

Warewashing (Utensil washing)

- Three 5-gallon (minimum) containers of water large enough to fit largest utensil.
- First container should contain soapy water for washing. Second container should contain fresh, clean water for rinsing. Third container should contain a sanitizer & water solution

forsanitizing.

- Container contents shall be changed as needed to maintain the water and solutions in a clean condition.
- Allow utensils to thoroughly air dry prior to storage or re-using.

Handwashing

Handwashing stations and sanitizer buckets with wiping cloths must be set up and used prior to any food handling, preparation, or sales.

Hands must be washed at the designated handwashing station as frequently as necessary to maintain good sanitation. Always wash hands before beginning work and after going to the restroom, eating, taking breaks, handling garbage, handling raw meat, or using tobacco products.

Handwashing station requirements

1. An accessible and functional handwashing sink or set up shall be provided within the perimeter of every business selling, serving, or providing food or beverages. Grill areas that are separate from other food handling areas should have a separate handwashing station. If only pre-packaged food products (e.g., canned pop, boxed candy, packaged snack foods) are sold, handwashing facilities are not required.
2. Handwashing facilities shall not be used for the cleaning of equipment, storage of wiping cloths, or the disposal of liquid waste.
3. All food products, cooking equipment and serving utensils shall be protected from splash or spillage caused by handwashing.
4. Disposable paper towels shall be provided with each handwashing facility, and will be properly disposed of after being used.
5. Any one of the following set-ups can be used as a handwashing facility in a temporary stand setup:
 - Portable commercial hand sinks that produce water flow within 10 seconds of activating a hand pump or opening a dispensing valve. Soap from a sanitary dispenser and paper towels shall be provided.
 - Minimum of two gallons per person (every four hours) of potable water will be maintained in a container, or containers, capable of dispensing water through a valve or spout. This valve or spout shall enable a constant flow of water when opened. The waste water shall be collected in another container and disposed of in a sanitary sewer. Soap from a sanitary dispenser and paper towels shall be provided.
6. An accessible hand sink shall accompany any toilet utilized by food handlers. Soap from a sanitary dispenser and disposable single-use towels shall be provided. The sink shall be used for handwashing only. Handwashing facilities shall be checked regularly for adequate soap, towels, and water.

Waste water and garbage disposal

- Waste water must be disposed of in an approved manner.
- Water or melting ice shall not create a wet or muddy area around the stand.
- An adequate number of covered trash containers shall be provided at each stand.
- It shall be the responsibility of the food stand operator to keep the area around their stand free of food scraps, paper and other trash.

Stand construction

Stand construction

- Stands shall be constructed to include overhead shelter to protect food.
- If required, side screening shall be provided to protect from insects, dust, and weather.
- If required, floors shall be constructed of wood, asphalt, rubber or plastic matting to control dust, mud, and insects.
- Adequate lighting shall be provided, and lights above exposed food preparation areas must be shielded or shatterproof.

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